



Healthy Kids Act

➔ What is it?

The purpose of the Healthy Kids Act is to establish physical activity requirements for students in kindergarten through 12th grade and to establish nutritional content standards for food and beverages sold on or provided on school grounds during the school day.

Specifically, the Healthy Kids Act does the following:

- Requires the Iowa Department of Education (Department) to establish nutritional guidelines for all foods sold on school grounds during the school day. This does not include food or beverages provided through school breakfast or lunch programs; sold for fundraising purposes; sold at concession stands; provided by parents, other volunteers, or students for class events; or provided by staff for the consumption by staff or students. The guidelines will be reviewed every five years and apply to school districts and accredited nonpublic schools.
- Calls for the department to convene a nutrition advisory panel in collaboration with the Department of Public Health to review research on pediatric nutrition to make recommendations regarding the nutritional standards.
- Requires school districts and accredited nonpublic schools to ensure that every kindergarten through fifth-grade student has 30 minutes a day of physical activity and every sixth- through 12th-grade student has 120 minutes per week of physical activity. Physical activity will be defined in department rules and can include physical education classes, recess, interscholastic activities, school activities, and non-school activities.
- Calls for the department to convene a working group of elementary and secondary fitness professionals and stakeholders to assist the Department in developing physical activities and models that will describe ways in which school districts may incorporate physical activities for students. These activities and models will be made available to schools in March 2009.
- Requires every student by the end of grade 12 to complete a course that leads to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification. The law exempts students unable to physically manage the course.
- Requires Iowa's Area Education Agencies (AEAs), or a consortium of two or more AEAs, to contract with a licensed dietician for the support of nutritional provisions in individual education plans and provide information to support school nutrition coordinators.

➔ How did it come about?

The Healthy Kids Act was established on May 13, 2008 when Governor Chet Culver signed into

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law Senate File 2425. This amended Iowa Code Section 256.7, Code Supplement 2007, new Subsection 29; Section 256.9, Sections 57 and 58; Section 256.11, Subsection 6, Code Supplement 2007; and Section 273.2, Code 2007, new Subsection 7.

Rules providing guidance on the Healthy Kids Act will be included in two sections of Iowa Administrative Code — Chapter 12 and Chapter 58. The State Board of Education gave public notice on December 11, 2008 of its intent to amend these chapters. The board will address whether or not to adopt the rules in April 2009.

➔ **Where does this initiative currently stand?**

School districts will be required to implement the physical activity component on July 1, 2009. The requirement for graduates to complete a CPR certification course will begin with the graduating class of 2011-2012. The nutrition content standards will not be in effect until the 2010-11 school year to allow schools time to work with vendors.

To prepare for implementation of the Healthy Kids Act, the Iowa Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Public Health, convened a nutrition advisory panel to review research on pediatric nutrition to make recommendations regarding the nutritional standards. This panel included representatives as prescribed by the legislation, such as the Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Iowa Dietetic Association. In addition, the department assembled a working group of elementary and secondary fitness professionals and stakeholders to assist the department in developing physical activities and models that describe ways in which school districts may incorporate physical activities for students. This group included representatives from the Red Cross, the American Heart Association of Iowa, the Department of Public Health, and other organizations.

To prepare further for implementation, the State Board noticed the proposed Iowa Administrative Rules regarding the Healthy Kids Act. Public hearings on Chapter 12 and 58 were held on February 3 and they were considered by the Administrative Rules Review Committee on February 6. The rules, in part, establish nutritional guidelines for many foods sold on school grounds during the school day.

The guidelines were established with input from the nutrition advisory panel. There is a wide range of views regarding how strict the nutrition guidelines should be and what is reasonable for schools to oversee. The department realizes that the rules could be either stricter or more lenient, and there are advocates for both approaches.

The department is currently developing a sample Physical Activity Contract for the physical activity portion of the law. In addition, models for implementation will be available to school districts this spring. The department is also continuing to study options regarding the nutrition content standards.

➔ **How will this initiative helped Iowa students?**

Over the past 30 years, the number of children who are overweight and obese has more than doubled, and the current generation of children is the first to have a lower life expectancy than the one that came before it. Data suggests the prevalence of overweight youths in Iowa, both very young and pre-adolescent, appears to outpace national rates and places our youth at increased risk for a host of chronic diseases.

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By providing physical activity and nutritional standards for students in the school setting, the Healthy Kids Act attempts to help address this issue. It is clearly understood that the school setting is just one environment in a student's life. This does not reach into students' homes or into student choices before and after the school day.

However, this law attempts to get Iowa's children moving and increase nutritional choices in school; helping to give them a solid foundation for a better future.

➔ **Where can I get more information?**

Please visit www.iowa.gov/education and click on "Laws & Regulations," and then "Administrative Rules Calendar" for the noticed rules. Additional information also follows this brief.